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Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East

The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 59/63 of 3 December 2004 on the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the region of the Middle East, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to pursue consultations with the States of the region and other concerned States, in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 46/30 of 6 December 1991, taking into account the evolving situation in the region, and to seek from those States their views on the measures outlined in chapters III and IV of the study annexed to his report of 10 October 1990 (A/45/435) or other relevant measures, in order to move towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In paragraph 11 of the same resolution, the Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixtieth session a report on the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. On 25 February 2005, a note verbale was sent to all Member States drawing their attention to paragraph 10 of resolution 59/63 and seeking their views on the matter. Replies, which have been received from Bolivia, Chile, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Japan, Mexico, the Russian Federation and the Syrian Arab Republic, are reproduced in section III below. Any additional replies from Member States will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Observations

3. The issue of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East remains important. It is recalled that, in the general debate and during deliberations on the issue at the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held from 2 to 27 May 2005 in New York, States parties, reiterated their support for the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, reaffirmed the importance of the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and recognized that the resolution remained valid until its goals and objectives were achieved.

4. The Secretary-General has on several occasions carried out various consultations with concerned parties within and outside the region in order to explore further ways and means of promoting the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The Secretary-General is concerned that developments in the region since his previous report on the subject of 19 July 2004 (A/59/165 (Part I)) may have an impact on efforts towards the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

5. The Secretary-General believes that continued efforts are needed and welcomes recent attempts to give new impetus to the Road Map developed by the Quartet of the European Union, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and the United Nations. The Secretary-General calls upon all concerned parties within and outside the region to resume dialogue with a view to creating stable security conditions and an eventual settlement that would facilitate the process of establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. The Secretary-General reiterates the continued readiness of the United Nations to provide any assistance deemed helpful in that regard.

III. Replies received from Governments

Bolivia

[Original: Spanish]
[5 May 2005]

The United Nations General Assembly, under the programme dealing with the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, has for several decades been urging States of the region of the Middle East to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. However, the situation remains unresolved to date and has even given rise to military interventions in countries of that region.

Bolivia believes that the proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East is vital for the creation of a suitable framework for a peaceful solution to the conflicts in that region.

The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East will take time to achieve. In the meantime, mutually agreed initiatives should be launched whereby the States of the region place all their nuclear activities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. This will require greater efforts by the United Nations than those currently needed for the four already established nuclear-weapon-free zones, those of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba.

Chile

[Original: Spanish]
[13 May 2005]

In the context of expanding and increasing the number of nuclear-weapon-free zones, Chile supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

At the Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, held in Mexico from 26 to 28 April 2005, Chile supported the initiative to create effective and realistic mechanisms that would promote the establishment of structures for adequate coordination, information-sharing and the exchange of similar and useful experiences among the four existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and eventual future zones, including the Middle East.

Islamic Republic of Iran

[Original: English]
[21 June 2005]

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is a recognized regional instrument to strengthen regional and international peace and security. More importantly, this idea plays an instrumental role in preventing the threat of nuclear war. Such an arrangement is in conformity with the provisions of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Three decades have elapsed since the introduction of this idea for the very first time by Iran in 1974. The resolutions on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East, which have been adopted without a vote by the United Nations General Assembly since 1980, represent the significance of the realization of this noble idea in the vital region of the Middle East. The following paragraphs list the achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran in fulfilling the principles and objectives of the resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East at three levels: national, regional and international measurements, with conclusions on the way ahead.

National measurements

The Islamic Republic of Iran, by renouncing the nuclear option and placing its nuclear facilities under the safeguard system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has shown its resolute determination to achieve the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. Therefore, such an act underscores the undiminished support of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, with the ultimate objective of securing a world free from nuclear weapons.

The Islamic Republic of Iran ratified the statute of IAEA in 1958 and subsequently signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1969, which its Parliament ratified in 1970. This process was furthered by the ratification of the IAEA Safeguards Agreement in 1973 and ultimately further accomplished by the signature of the Additional Protocol to its Safeguards Agreement in 18 December 2003.

In implementing its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, specifically articles II and III thereof, all nuclear facilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran are devoted to peaceful purposes and are under the full scope of the safeguards of IAEA. Furthermore, in order to contribute to the realization of a world free from weapons of mass destruction, particularly in the Middle East, the Islamic Republic of Iran has also joined the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention and the 1925 Geneva Protocol.

Regional measurements

Owing to the non-adherence by Israel to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and, more importantly the refusal of that regime to place its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under the IAEA verification system, the realization of such a zone, a lofty and long-sought-after aspiration of the countries in the region, has yet to materialize. The irresponsible behaviour of this regime in this respect has put the establishment of such a zone in the region in the near future in serious doubt.

As the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference signifies, after the recent accession of several countries to this treaty, all countries in the Middle East region, except for the Israeli regime, have become States parties to the treaty. The Sixth Review Conference requested all States, particularly nuclear weapons States, the States of the Middle East and other interested States, to report through the Conference and the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee meetings to be held in advance of that Conference, on steps that have been taken to promote the

achievement of such a zone and the realization of the goals and objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

The next step is to take concrete measures towards securing the adherence of Israel to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to urge this regime strongly to adhere without any delay to this Treaty and place its unsafeguarded facilities under the IAEA verification system.

As requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/63 of 3 December 2004, the Secretary-General would inform the Assembly of the result of his consultations with the countries in the region on the realization of this idea. It is our conviction that the Secretary-General should dispatch a special envoy to the countries in the region for the required consultations with those countries to facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. At present, Israel is the only non-party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the region. Despite repeated calls by the international community, demonstrated in the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, related resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, IAEA and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Israel, confident of the political and military support of the United States of America, has neither acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons nor placed its nuclear facilities under the full scope of IAEA safeguards. Israel has not even declared its intention to accede to the Treaty. Israel's clandestine nuclear activities seriously threaten both regional peace and security and endanger the non-proliferation regime.

International measurements

The Islamic Republic of Iran, in a positive response to the invitation of the Sixth Review Conference to the States parties, has lent its unreserved support for the early establishment of the zone free from nuclear weapons and has spared no effort to achieve this invaluable objective.

The decision of the 2000 Review Conference reaffirmed the political will of the international community regarding the importance of the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East.

The idea of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone as an important disarmament and confidence-building measure in the region of the Middle East was first initiated by Iran in 1974, followed by the adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly. Since 1980, the General Assembly has annually adopted, by consensus, a resolution on this issue. The repeated adoption of this resolution by the General Assembly is a manifestation of global support for the promotion of peace, security and stability in the Middle East through the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region.

As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Islamic Republic of Iran is fully committed to its international undertakings and believes that this international instrument is the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Universal adherence to this Treaty, in particular in the region of the Middle East, would effectively ensure the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region.

The 2000 Review Conference reaffirmed the importance of the resolution on the Middle East. Due to the significant provisions of this resolution, the Islamic Republic of Iran and other States in the region would expect that resolution to be swiftly implemented, especially by its co-sponsors, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as depositories of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, in its bilateral and multilateral disarmament dialogue with other Member States and, in particular, with some nuclear-weapons States and members of the EU, has always urged their active contributions towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East.

The way ahead

The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the opinion that pending the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, no country in the region should develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or permit the stationing on their territories, or territories under their control, of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices, and that they should refrain from actions that run counter to both the letter and spirit of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other international resolutions and documents relating to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the Review Conferences have a significant role in the realization of such a zone in the Middle East. Such a zone could be realized through the establishment of a special body in the Review Conferences, which would consider and recommend proposals for the introduction of ways and means, in terms of concrete recommendations, for urgent and practical steps for the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the firm belief that an agreed plan of action and timetable for the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, especially in the Middle East, should be a top priority on the agenda of all States parties to the Treaty, especially the nuclear-weapons States. There should be enough pressure on Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and place all its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards in order to pave the way for the long-sought-after goal of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Finally, the unconditional adherence by Israel to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the conclusion of a full-scope safeguard agreement with IAEA would, undoubtedly, lead to the early realization of the nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Israel

[Original: English]
[5 July 2005]

Israel has always maintained that in the Middle East nuclear issues as well as all regional security issues, both conventional and non-conventional, should be dealt with in the full context of the peace process. It is in this framework that Israel

supports the eventual establishment of the Middle East as a mutually verifiable nuclear-weapon-free zone that would also be free of chemical and biological weapons as well as ballistic missiles.

General Assembly resolution 59/63 on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East does not adequately reflect Israel's position vis-à-vis the nuclear issue in the region. In fact, Israel has substantive and significant reservations regarding certain elements of the resolution.

Notwithstanding those reservations, for over 20 years Israel has chosen to join the consensus and has made extensive efforts to preserve the language and prevent unilateral changes. Israel has acted this way out of its belief that, instead of highlighting different positions, there is a fundamental need for building confidence and creating a common vision for all the States of the Middle East. The promotion of this vision must take into account the particular circumstances of the Middle East, some of which are closely related to the particular characteristics of the region, while others emanate from recent changes in the international scene. In spite of several positive developments in the realm of non-proliferation in the region, there are still countries that continue to acquire and develop weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, deny Israel's right to exist and continue to pursue aggressively hostile practices towards Israel.

There is also continued lack of progress in addressing recognized loopholes in global non-proliferation regimes that allow some countries to violate their international obligations without penalty. This is especially true when it comes to the Middle East, where membership in global conventions evidently does not provide adequate assurances, in view of the track record of non-compliance with international obligations by certain States in the region. The case of Iraq and the widely shared concerns over the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially after the recent revelations regarding its nuclear activities, exemplify this reality. This environment of growing threat has a critical impact on the region's ability to move towards the establishment of a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles. The danger of these regional realities has gown with the revelations of a black market and the proliferation of networks through which equipment, technology and nuclear know-how are being transferred. We are no longer facing just a small group of rogue States, but also non-state actors.

Accordingly, there is an urgent need to intensify efforts to halt the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles to countries of concern in the Middle East, as well as not to provide nuclear fuel cycle technologies to additional States. There is an urgent necessity for a range of international, regional and national efforts to promote a variety of measures, inter alia, more stringent controls on sensitive exports, especially to those countries that are engaged in extensive proliferation activities and are also involved in supporting terrorism.

This disturbing reality in the Middle East mandates a practical step-by-step approach, bearing in mind the ultimate goal of achieving peaceful relations and reconciliation among all the States in the region. This process, as has been demonstrated by the experience of other regions, such as Latin America, is inherently an incremental one. It can only realistically begin with modest arrangements for confidence-building measures in order to build the necessary trust for more ambitious cooperative security undertakings. Effective arms control

measures can only be achieved and sustained in a region where war, armed conflict, terrorism, political hostility and incitement are not features of everyday life.

In recent years, Israel has sought to lay the foundations of peace in the region based on an historic reconciliation, embodying the notions of compromise, mutual trust and respect, open borders and good-neighbourliness. The basis for coexistence between Israel and its neighbours was laid in bilateral peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, and we still hope to widen this process to encompass the Palestinians, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. In addition, after the Madrid Conference of 1991, Israel made a substantial effort to contribute to the success of the arms control and regional security talks in the framework of the multilateral negotiations of the peace process. The arms control and regional security talks were the appropriate forum to promote confidence and to address regional security issues and challenges. These talks were, unfortunately, discontinued by another State in the region instead of becoming an important channel for regional dialogue.

Despite this lack of progress both regionally and globally, Israel attempted during the last decade to step up its involvement in international non-proliferation and arms control efforts that are consistent with its vital margins of security. These efforts constitute an important component in the overall effort to improve the regional security climate. It was in this spirit that Israel signed the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1993, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996 and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons in 1995.

In addition, last year Israel adopted the Export and Import Order (control over chemical, biological and nuclear exports). This Order prohibits the export of materials and items designated for weapons of mass destruction programmes, and establishes regulations for the control of items in the nuclear, chemical and biological domain, based on the lists established by the Australia Group and the Nuclear Supplies Group. By adopting this Order, Israel is implementing its policy of adherence to these export control regimes. This act supplements Israel's export control legislation on missiles and related material as an adherent to the Missile Technology Control Regime. Accordingly, Israel welcomes the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which aims to identify concrete steps against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, particularly by non-state actors, and is committed to its implementation.

Israel shares the concern of the international community pertaining to strengthening the safety and security of nuclear materials and facilities to prevent their misuse. In this spirit, Israel joined and played an active role in recent years in the deliberations of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials, signed the Convention on Nuclear Safety, supported the IAEA Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors and endorsed the IAEA Code of Conduct on Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

Israel also participates in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and has constructively engaged in the efforts of the United Nations and in other forums to prevent the proliferation of ballistic missiles and other related technology.

In the Middle East, we are particularly vulnerable to the grave consequences of illicit transfers of small arms and light weapons. Israel therefore attaches high importance to the global attempt, including in the United Nations deliberations, on how to combat and eradicate illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and

hope that the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action, adopted in July 2001, will contribute to the global fight against terror and will reduce tensions in different regions, including the Middle East.

As the international community has recognized, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone should be based on arrangements freely arrived at among all the States of the region concerned. Such a zone can only be established if and when direct negotiations take place among the States of the region after they have recognized each other and have established full peaceful and diplomatic relations. Naturally, such a zone cannot be established and effectively verified other than by the parties themselves, nor can it be established in a situation where some States maintain an active state of war with Israel, refuse in principle to maintain peaceful relations with Israel or even recognize its very right to exist.

In the absence of these preconditions, we could learn from the experience of other regions in building regional security. In such a spirit, during the visit of the Director General of IAEA to Israel in the summer of 2004, Israel proposed an agenda for a seminar, under IAEA auspices, to learn from the experience of other regions in building regional security and to explore its relevance to the Middle East. We regret that an initial agreement on its modalities, which Israel helped to secure with much effort, and long discussions on topics to be discussed, nevertheless failed to create the conditions necessary to conduct such a meeting.

We believe that one-sided and unbalanced resolutions aimed at isolating and alienating Israel, such as the resolution on the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, do not contribute to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Moreover, they undermine the confidence and climate of cooperation that are the essential basis for achieving that end, ignoring the complex reality of the region.

Countries, particularly in the Middle East, should realize that these resolutions cannot be a substitute for the need to conduct direct negotiations, build confidence, reduce threats and establish stable peaceful relations in the region, all of which are essential milestones on the way to a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Over the years, Israel has consistently pursued the policy described above. We regard this policy to be as valid today as it has ever been over the last decade. It provides sound guidance for regional security, based on foundations of stability and peace.

Japan

[Original: English]
[9 May 2005]

1. Lack of progress in the establishment of a weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone in the Middle East poses a serious concern for the credibility of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Japan has supported, and continues to fully support, the 1995 resolution on the Middle East adopted at the Review and Extension Conference, which calls for the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free from weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and their delivery systems. In this regard, Japan has joined the adoption by consensus of resolutions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, which have been submitted to the General Assembly since 1974.

2. The establishment in the Middle East of a zone free from nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems will ultimately require the adherence by all States in the region to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention. Adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by all States in the region would also be a substantial practical step towards this end. Japan has been actively taking part in international efforts to encourage universal adherence to these multilateral legally binding instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. As a part of such endeavours, Japan has urged the Israeli Government, at the ministerial level, to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear weapon State, as well as to adhere to the other treaties related to weapons of mass destruction as soon as possible. Japan also has urged, at the ministerial level, the Governments of the Syrian Arab Republic, Egypt, and the Islamic Republic of Iran to adhere to weapons of mass destruction-related treaties at the earliest date.

3. It is no less important that compliance with those legal instruments should be fully assured. Japan also considers it crucial that the future Government of Iraq adhere to all relevant non-proliferation agreements in order to prove its willingness to behave as a responsible member of the international community.

In this context, Japan stresses the necessity of strengthening the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system, which plays a vital role in underpinning the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Japan strongly believes that the conclusion of the IAEA safeguards agreements and additional protocols by all States in the region is essential for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

4. Japan recognizes the importance of the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran has voluntarily continued and extended its suspension of all uranium enrichment-related and reprocessing activities. At the same time, Japan reaffirms its strong concern that the country's policy of concealment up to October 2003 has resulted in many breaches of its obligations to comply with its safeguards agreement with IAEA. Japan believes that in order to dispel the serious concerns of the international community, it is essential for the Islamic Republic of Iran to sincerely implement all the requirements of the relevant IAEA resolutions. Japan expects the current negotiation process between France, Germany and the United Kingdom (EU3/EU) and the Islamic Republic of Iran to result in a success. In particular, Japan has urged the Islamic Republic of Iran, at every opportunity, to agree, through its negotiations with EU3/EU, to provide sufficient "objective guarantees" that its nuclear programme is exclusively for peaceful purposes.

5. Japan welcomes the decision of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, announced in December 2003, to abandon all its weapons of mass destruction programmes, while expressing concern over its past failures to meet the requirements of its safeguards agreement, which constituted non-compliance. Japan is ready to assist the ongoing efforts of the country to comply with the international legal instruments and frameworks on disarmament and non-proliferation. Japan held a bilateral consultation on disarmament and non-proliferation with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for the first time in June 2004.

6. Japan is firmly committed to supporting the Middle East peace process, a key to achieving regional stability. Such stability is a vital factor in establishing

conditions for a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. Japan will intensify political consultation with the Israelis and the Palestinians in order to encourage their peace efforts and will assist the Palestinians to help them establish an independent State in accordance with the Road Map.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[5 May 2005]

Mexico supports the adherence to and the establishment and expansion of nuclear-weapon-free zones, which demonstrate the importance their members attach to the free exercise of their sovereignty, and to their choice of and legal commitment to a regime of total absence of nuclear weapons, with an international system for monitoring and enforcing that obligation.

In this regard, Mexico has supported the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, aware of its contribution to fostering a comprehensive, stable and lasting peace in the region, and to the goal of nuclear disarmament. Mexico believes that non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are two sides of the same coin, and in this sense, that denuclearized zones further the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

This belief led Mexico to promote the Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, which was held in Tlatelolco, Mexico City, from 26 to 28 April 2005, and which successfully adopted a Declaration expressing the belief of the members of nuclear-weapon-free zones that the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of agreements freely entered into by the States comprising such a zone enhances global and regional peace and security, strengthens the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contributes to the objective of nuclear disarmament.

The Declaration points out that the establishment of such zones and the full compliance with such agreements or arrangements ensures that they are genuinely free from nuclear weapons, and that respect for such zones by nuclear weapon States constitutes an important nuclear disarmament measure.

In paragraph 18 of the Declaration, the States members of the zones reiterate their support for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and in this regard, reaffirm the importance of Israel's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards, with a view to realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East.

This constitutes a reaffirmation of Mexico's commitment to and agreement with the initiative to make the Middle East into a denuclearized zone. Mexico has accordingly supported the resolutions adopted on this subject by the United Nations General Assembly, the General Conference of IAEA, and in the context of the review process for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Mexico believes that practical steps should be taken as a matter of urgency to establish this zone, as stated in the Final Document of the Sixth Review Conference

of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 2000. Accordingly, in the context of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in New York from 2 to 27 May 2005, Mexico considers that full implementation of the resolution adopted by the Review Conference of 1995 on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East should continue to be sought, and that reports should be requested showing progress achieved in attaining this goal.

In the international campaign to eliminate nuclear dangers, greater efforts should be made to confront the risks of nuclear proliferation, and to further the goal of nuclear disarmament. In this context, Mexico believes that each of the Parties concerned should take a step forward in their commitment towards peace in the region. Unilateral declarations, confidence-building measures, transparency, methods of verification, weapons accountability and security guarantees by nuclear weapon States, and the full implementation of the Additional Protocol to the IAEA Nuclear Safeguards Agreements, are among the widely accepted methods for creating an environment conducive to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Mexico considers that the measures outlined in chapters III and IV of the 1990 study on effective and verifiable measures which would facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East are positive steps that should be agreed upon by the individual States of the region in order to make steady and systematic progress towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Mexico reiterates that dialogue and the political will of each of the States of the region are essential to reaching an understanding that will bring about peace and development for their peoples.

Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]
[26 May 2005]

Proposals with respect to General Assembly resolution 59/63, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East"

We believe that it is useful to reflect in particular the following in the new draft resolution:

The establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the 1995 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the provisions of the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference would best meet the urgent need to establish peace and stability in the region. The recent advances in the positions of some countries of the region with respect to non-proliferation are cause for cautious optimism in that area. They include, first and foremost, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's voluntary abandonment of any programme to build weapons of mass destruction and progress on clarifying concerns over the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear plans. Egypt's failure to submit reports to IAEA is cause for concern, but, at the same time, we

commend the cooperation shown by Cairo in clarifying questions relating to it. It is important that Israel, too, should demonstrate political will and relinquish its current position on the NPT and place all of its nuclear activities under IAEA control.

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]
[20 April 2005]

The Syrian Arab Republic has affirmed in all international forums that it is firmly committed to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. On 29 December 2003, acting out of a sense of responsibility as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, it called on the Security Council to hold consultations on the Syrian initiative aimed at establishing a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It also called on all friendly and peace-loving States to support that initiative in order to attain the objective frequently sought by Syria since it signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1968 and the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1992.

We are convinced that the possession of such destructive weapons by any State in the Middle East will constitute a threat to the region and be regarded as a source of great concern, not only for the peoples of the region but also for every country in the world. Syria has therefore reiterated its request for consultations on its previous initiative of April 2003, which was discussed again on 29 December 2003, and is still in blue before the Security Council.

Through that initiative, Syria elaborates a mechanism to address the concerns arising from the current situation in the region with a view to making it free of all weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and promoting a just and comprehensive peace based on the resolutions of international legitimacy. It also calls for pressure on Israel to force it to comply with the wishes of the international community, implement the relevant United Nations resolutions, put an end to its colonialist ambitions exemplified by its occupation of the territories of three States, namely Syria, Palestine and Lebanon, and stop the development of its nuclear arsenal. These are all Arab, regional and international demands and are key to the credibility and universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to the principle of justice in which the policy of double standards is abandoned.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic believes that the following measures and arrangements should be adopted in order to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, as called for in United Nations resolutions:

Israel, the only State in the region which possesses nuclear facilities and a nuclear stockpile, must accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. All of its nuclear facilities must also be placed under the IAEA safeguards regime and its nuclear stockpile must be eliminated. Furthermore, it must comply with Security Council resolution 487 (1981), which explicitly calls upon Israel urgently to place its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic believes that the United Nations is the appropriate framework for serious discussions that provide room for all

concerned States in the Middle East to work together for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The General Assembly has persistently affirmed the commitment of the international community to the establishment of such a zone through the annual adoption of its resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, most recently resolution 59/63 of 2004.